

## Selecting a Contractor

When selecting a contractor, you want a partner who can meet the challenges of the mechanical contracting industry. No two jobs are ever alike. Each new project presents new challenges that are opportunities for a contractor to meet your expectations through innovation, skill and creativity. Consider the following when making your selection:

**TIME** - Keeping a project on time is imperative. Your mechanical contractor should be experienced with pre-project planning and design, in-house CAD, purchasing, critical path scheduling and prefabrication, which are all essential components to keep your project on schedule from start to finish.

**COST** - Without the proper project management tools, a project can be grossly over budget before completion. A mechanical contractor should use digitized estimation, accounting and project management software that enables projects to be tracked as they progress, alerting you to any potential overrun. Because tools and shop inventory are essential to each job, a contractor with more than one strategic location can supply job sites with materials quickly and economically. Finally, a mechanical contractor should have the ability to prefabricate materials in-house, which can reduce on-site labor costs by as much as 60% or more.

**QUALITY** - Quality should never be sacrificed for price. A mechanical contractor should have a sound Quality Assurance/Quality Control program in place to aid a project from the pre-planning/production stage through completion.

**SAFETY** - A good mechanical contractor is one that is committed to training and education for its personnel. You should ask to review a contractor's safety statistics and policies before they perform any work.

**LABOR** - The manpower required to complete a project will vary depending on the scope of work. Most contractors are affiliated with local unions and utilize their expertise and craftsmanship to meet demands and quality work requirements. A strong partnership with unions can keep manhours in balance and foster successful results.

**SERVICE** - Mechanical systems will require maintenance from time to time. Your contractor should be able to provide exceptional and efficient service to your plumbing, heating, ventilating, air conditioning, and process pipe work. Ask if they have a service division or how they handle service requests once a system is installed.

**COMMUNICATION** - There are many opportunities for error whenever several different camps need to collaborate on the same project. It is imperative that your contractor have a chain of communication in place that ensures every team member, person in the field and management staff, remain in touch with one another and are updated on the day-to-day activities associated with the job. Project meetings should take place regularly to review the project status and address any issues that may arise.